



2021

CRICKET IN MONASH

DISCUSSION PAPER

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MAYOR'S MESSAGE

It is with great pleasure that I introduce the Monash Cricket Discussion Paper 2021.

Cricket is a great sport for the young, and the not so young, and increasingly a sport for women and girls as well as for men and boys. It's a sport enjoyed by people from widely diverse cultural backgrounds and provides an admirable mixing pot for our multicultural society. Our cricket clubs are vibrant and provide a terrific service to our community.

This Discussion Paper represents meaningful and effective engagement with cricket clubs in Monash and Cricket Victoria in 2020. The Monash Cricket Forum was a unique opportunity for Council to engage with all cricket clubs and discuss issues and opportunities that are unique to the sport. Cricket has a very strong presence in the City of Monash, with 39 cricket ovals in Monash accommodating community cricket each summer. What we are doing now is planning for the future of the sport to ensure it thrives into the future.

This Discussion Paper represents the views that were put forward by clubs and presents a series of questions that delve into how the sport can be successful and sustainable in Monash for many years to come. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who participated in the forum in the lead up to the development of this document, including cricket club representatives and Cricket Victoria. I am confident that, working together, we will effectively plan for the future of cricket in Monash.

BRIAN LITTLE

Mayor

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The City of Monash is a culturally diverse community in Melbourne's south-east suburbs. We are home to an estimated population of over 200,000 residents, making us one of the most populous municipalities in Victoria. Forty-eight point nine percent (48.9%) of residents are born overseas, which is much higher than Greater Melbourne at 33.8%. Twenty-one point nine percent (21.9%) of the population are aged 60 or over, which is slightly higher than the Greater Melbourne average of 19%.

Our City (81.5 square kilometres) includes the following suburbs: Ashwood, Clayton, Glen Waverley, Hughesdale, Huntingdale, Mount Waverley, Mulgrave, Notting Hill, Oakleigh, Oakleigh East, and Wheelers Hill. Parts of Chadstone, Burwood and Oakleigh South are also included in Monash.

1.2 This Discussion Paper

This Discussion Paper has been developed following the Monash Cricket Forum held with clubs and Cricket Victoria on 8 September, 2020. It considers issues and opportunities as identified by clubs, Cricket Victoria and Council officers at the forum.

For more information on forum findings, refer to Appendix A – Summary of forum findings.

1.3 The Next Steps

This Discussion Paper will be released for broader community consultation before findings are presented to Council with any recommendations to help Council plan for the future of cricket in Monash.



2. CRICKET PARTICIPATION

2.1 Benefits of playing cricket

Cricket can be played both socially and competitively, across all age groups. While competitive cricket is mostly played on a field, cricket just for fun can be played in backyards and local parks. It is a sport with several health benefits, including improved endurance, coordination, balance and cardiovascular health.

Cricket is a sport that is inclusive of various ages, skill levels and athletic ability. Outside of the physical benefits of playing cricket, it also encourages team work, communication and social interaction.

Source: www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/HealthyLiving/cricket-health-benefits

2.2 Broader cricket trends/participation

Adults (aged 15+)

According to 2019/20 Ausplay data for cricket (released October, 2020), the national participation rate for cricket is 2.7% of the Australian adult population (aged 15+). Nationally, the most popular motivations for adults to participate in cricket were 'Fun/enjoyment' (63.6%), 'Social reasons' (36%) and 'Physical health or fitness' (23.5%).

Across Australia, males account for 88% of adult participation in cricket. Despite the growth of shorter format cricket in recent years, the average outdoor cricket session for adults lasts over 6 hours.

Overwhelmingly, the most popular reason for adults dropping out of the sport was 'Not enough time/Too many commitments.'

Juniors (aged 0-14)

For juniors, that national participation rate of 5.3% for those aged 0-14 years is almost double the adult participation. Like adult participation, males account for the vast majority of junior participants across the country at 90%.

Average outdoor cricket sessions for juniors last 180 minutes. In terms of age groups, the peak participation age for both boys and girls cricket is between ages 9-11.

Note: the above junior statistics only take into consideration out-of-school cricket activities.



2.3 Cricket participation in Monash

The Ausplay 2019/20 participation data for Monash showed that 2.1% of the Monash community participates in cricket (estimate population of 4,088). This is below the participation rates shown for other sports, such as tennis (4%), Australian football (3.7%), football (3.4%), basketball (3.1%), golf 2.9%, and netball (2.7%).

Of particular note, the Ausplay report for Monash shows that above 95% of the Monash population who participate in cricket are male. This is a higher percentage of male dominated participation when compared with national averages, which sit at 88% for adults and 90% for juniors. This gender imbalance for cricket participation in Monash is reflected by seasonal team registrations, where just one senior female team is registered to play in season 2020-21.

66% of Monash cricket participants are aged between 18-44 years.

In season 2020-21, Monash cricket clubs have had access to 39 cricket ovals of various sizes and standards. These ovals are used by clubs via a seasonal license agreement with Council. The following table summarises the total number of teams spread across these 39 cricket ovals in season 2020-21.

Table 1 – Registered teams for cricket clubs accessing Monash, Season 2020-21

ADULT MALE	ADULT FEMALE	JUNIOR BOYS	JUNIOR GIRLS	TOTAL
139	1	128	13	281

3. CRICKET FACILITIES

3.1 Distribution of Council-owned cricket ovals

Cricket facility mapping and analysis of distribution of cricket facilities throughout Monash shows that the majority of Council-owned cricket venues are quite evenly distributed throughout Monash. The highest population per oval ratios in Monash are recorded in Mount Waverley and Clayton/Notting Hill areas.

Table 2 - Distribution of Council-owned cricket ovals by sub-region

AREA	POPULATION	CRICKET OVALS	POPULATION NUMBER PER OVAL
City of Monash	200,077	39	5,130
Ashwood Burwood Chadstone	20,195	4	5,049
Clayton Notting Hill	26,722	3	8,907
Glen Waverley	43,064	10	4,306
Mount Waverley	36,327	5	7,265
Mulgrave	20,896	4	5,224
Oakleigh Hughesdale Oakleigh East Oakleigh South	31,863	6	5,310
Wheelers Hill	21,010	7	3,001

Refer to Appendix B - Distribution of cricket venues in Monash

3.2 Audits and assessments of Monash cricket outfields

In the 2019/20 cricket season, a series of audits and assessments of cricket outfields and associated supporting infrastructure were completed. These audits were undertaken independently by external experts.

Common facility issues across Monash cricket outfields include:

- Issues with pitch irrigation
- Issues with pitch drainage
- Presence of winter grass tufts
- Heavy soil, contributing to poor drainage
- Less than ideal surface shape

3.3 Assessments of Monash turf wickets

In 2020, Council commissioned independent condition audits for turf wickets in Monash. Furthermore, a benchmarking exercise was undertaken with other metropolitan Councils concerning the quantity of turf wickets, maintenance and preparation standards, and key responsibility areas between clubs and Council for turf wickets maintenance and preparation.

Findings from the turf wicket condition audit include identification of turf wickets experiencing overuse, as well as identifying wicket condition issues such as high thatch levels and low clay content.

Another key feature of the report included recommended maintenance and preparation costs for turf wickets. This is based on the standard of cricket played and the quantity of strips at each turf wicket venue.

Table 3 – Recommended annual turf wicket preparation and maintenance costs

Reserve	Council Classification	Centre Wicket		Practice Wicket	
		Strips	Maint. Cost	Strips	Maint. Cost
Central North	A (Premier 1s and 2s)	8	\$64,000	9	\$14,400
Central South	A (Premier 3s and 4s)	8	\$64,000		
Essex Heights	B (Local Turf)	4	\$24,000	8	\$9,600
Meade	B (Local Turf)	5	\$30,000		
Mount Waverley	B (Subdistrict 1s and 2s)	6	\$42,000	8	\$11,200
Mulgrave	B (Local Turf)	5	\$30,000	6	\$7,200
Pinewood	B (Subdistrict 3s and 4s)	4	\$28,000		
WA Scammell	B (Subdistrict 3s and 4s)	6	\$42,000		
Warrawee	B (Subdistrict 1s and 2s)	6	\$42,000	11	\$17,600

Base Maintenance Costs (\$/strip)		
Classification	Centre Wicket	Practice Wicket
Premier	\$8,000	\$1,600
Subdistrict	\$7,000	\$1,400
Local	\$6,000	\$1,200



4. CLUB GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

4.1 Club tenancy and occupancy agreements

All cricket clubs that seasonally use Council-owned cricket venues in Monash do so under a licence agreement. These agreements are typically seasonal and mostly apply between the months of October and February. This can be a challenge for clubs and curators, especially when early season fixtures or end-of-season finals are often played outside of the typical seasonal allocation.

Cricket clubs have licences to facilities that are located within public open space and reserves that are publically accessible, meaning maintenance and management responsibilities fall entirely with Council. As landowner and asset manager of community cricket facilities in Monash, Council applies seasonal sportsground fees to recoup approximately 15% of maintenance costs from tenants. This cost recovery figure and varying levels of maintenance are determined by the level of sport played on that field. That is to say, a club playing at an A grade field will pay more than a C grade field. Additional fees apply for clubs who participate on turf wickets.

For more information on this, please refer to Council's Active Reserves Fees and Charges Policy: www.monash.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/leisure/recreation-strategies/active-monash-fees-and-charges-policy-february-2018-updated.pdf

4.2 Sustainable clubs and venues

A trend in recent seasons for turf cricket clubs is to expand opportunities for local junior cricket participation on turf. Whilst these opportunities may foster intra-club development for local clubs and act as a draw card for local youth cricketers, these matches are outside of the Cricket Victoria talent pathway structures. Given what we know about the condition of some turf wickets across Monash, the need to prioritise and monitor turf wicket usage has become an issue for Council. In response to this and other matters relating to the management of cricket wickets, a draft Cricket Wicket Policy has been developed in attachment to this Discussion Paper. Please note that the policy is in draft format only and we are seeking your feedback on it. There are questions relating to the draft policy in the Discussion Questions section of this paper.

Several cricket clubs in Monash have already identified that the sustainability of their club is closely tied to their capacity to understand and successfully engage with the various demographics of their community. At the Monash Cricket Forum, several clubs identified *'Increased participation for junior and senior females'* and *'Broadening the appeal of cricket to non-traditional demographics'* as key priority areas for the future of cricket in Monash. Given what we know about cricket participation in Monash presently, working with clubs to achieve these strategic directions is an opportunity to embed inclusive, diverse and vibrant cricket participation in Monash.

At the Monash Cricket Forum, several clubs nominated *'Ageing committees and finding new committee members'* as one of the most critical issues facing the sport presently. This is an issue that many sporting codes are currently faced with and one which further emphasises that clubs can often be stretched by leaving 'too much to too few'. For cricket clubs, it is worth becoming familiar with the Community Cricket Resources section of Cricket Victoria's website, specifically the section regarding the recruitment and management of volunteers, which can be found at: www.community.cricket.com.au/clubs/running-your-club/recruit-and-manage-volunteers

4.3 Club Health Check

For all community cricket clubs, the Club Health Check is available for clubs to complete in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement in how they operate. It is an online self-assessment tool, with a checklist that looks at a number of different factors that are crucial to success at club level and together these factors are used to build an overall picture of the way your club carries out its operations.

The assessment should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. Once clubs have answered all questions, a detailed report will be emailed to them which will identify resources, tools, improvements and growth areas. The same report will also be sent to the Regional Cricket Manager to provide further assistance if required.

For more information on the Club Health Check, please visit:

www.community.cricket.com.au/clubs/running-your-club/club-planning

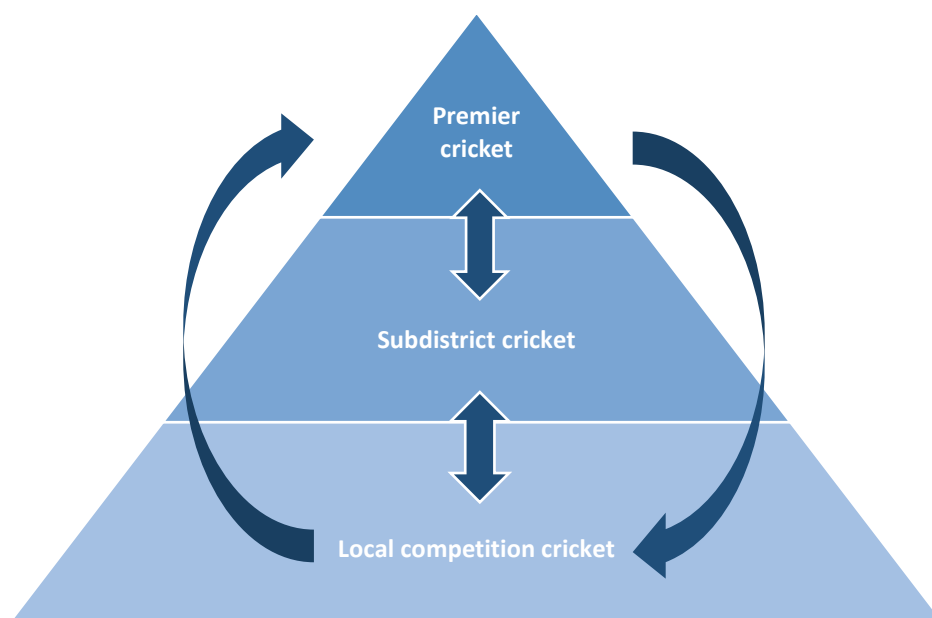
4.4 Partnerships and collaboration amongst cricket clubs

It was identified by several clubs at the Monash Cricket Forum that there are opportunities to strengthen relationships between cricket clubs in Monash to create a better connected and vibrant Monash cricket community. *‘Increasing club networks for sharing of resources, facilities and players,’* as well as *‘Developing a shared vision and strategic direction for the sport,’* were the two most popular responses from clubs when asked what needs to happen to ensure a successful future for cricket in Monash. This suggests there is a genuine appetite amongst Monash cricket clubs for stronger collaboration and strategic planning.

There is one premier cricket club in Monash that participates in the Victorian Premier Cricket League administered by Cricket Victoria. Further to this, there are two cricket clubs who participate in the Victorian Subdistrict Cricket Association, and then several clubs who are affiliated with local cricket competitions. With this being the case, cricket in Monash is well placed to establish clear and structured participation pathways.

There are already relationships between cricket clubs in Monash whereby players can progress from one club to another in the interest of player development and pathway. There is an opportunity to plan for the establishment of more arrangements such as this, to reinforce and strategically embed the role that grassroots local clubs play in Monash.

Figure 1 - Cricket club hierarchy pyramid





5. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

5.1 Issue 1 - Cricket facilities

1. In the interest of growing junior skill development and training opportunities, is shared access of cricket training nets between clubs an opportunity that Council should further explore? Yes or No? Please explain why.
2. Is shared access to designated junior cricket training and match venues, whereby several clubs will have access rights to the facility, something that Council should further explore? Yes or No? Please explain why.
3. Council's current fees and charges policy does not recognise the additional resources and costs required for the preparation and maintenance of turf practice wickets.
 - a. Should this be amended so that relevant clubs are charged for the use of these exclusive use assets? Yes or No? Please explain why.
 - b. If yes, what do you feel is an appropriate percentage to recoup from clubs for the maintenance and preparation of these exclusive use assets?
4. There are already usage arrangements between some Monash cricket clubs and Council for the use of some government school ovals. Is this something that Council should explore further at additional school sites in Monash, with a focus on identifying suitable facilities that can accommodate junior participation?
5. In the interest of greater participation opportunities through night cricket, do you support having a designated lit cricket venue in Monash that can host evening matches and training? Yes or No? Please explain why.

5.2 Issue 2 - Sustainability and governance of cricket clubs

1. What action can Council take to support cricket clubs who may be declining in numbers and/or are struggling to attract new volunteers?
2. Given what we know about the condition of some turf wickets in Monash, as well as the resources required to maintain and prepare these assets, should Council introduce prioritisation and monitoring measures around the use of turf wickets? Yes or No? Please explain why.
3. A draft Cricket Wicket Policy has been developed. Do you support the introduction of such a policy to manage practice and centre wickets consistently across Monash? Yes or No? Please explain why.
4. Please provide any other comments or feedback in relation to what is proposed in the draft Cricket Wicket Policy.
5. At the forum, 'increased participation of juniors and senior females' was the most popular club response when clubs were asked what the sport will ideally look like in 10-15 years from now. Is it reasonable to expect that all cricket clubs in Monash commit to this at governance level and in their strategic plans? Yes or No? If yes, what do clubs need to do in order to achieve this outcome?
6. Do you support the opportunity for more formal, possibly hierarchical partnerships between Monash cricket clubs whereby players can potentially progress from one club to another in the interest of player development? It is possible that partnerships can also include formal or informal relationships between a club and local schools. Yes or No? Please explain why.

5.3 Issue 3 – Participation

1. 'Progression and retention of juniors' was identified by clubs at the forum as a key priority area over the next 10 years. What do you feel needs to occur for cricket clubs in Monash to achieve this? Please elaborate and explain why.
2. Cricket in Monash is currently below national rates for female participation. In your opinion, what are the primary barriers to female participation in cricket in Monash?

Please select:

- Gender neutral facilities
- Club culture
- Time constraints
- Lack of small-sided participation opportunities in the event that a club may not have enough girls/women to establish a full team of 11
- Lack of club resources and volunteer support

- Lack of marketing and promotion of female cricket opportunities
 - Lack of adequate coaching programs for girls
 - Lack of progression opportunities for girls at Monash clubs
 - Other (please specify)
3. Are cricket participation programs in primary schools, led by Cricket Victoria and supported by Council, something that you feel we should strive towards enhancing and increasing? Yes or No? Please explain why.
 4. To continue to grow participation opportunities in Monash, should Council seek to formally allocate cricket grounds to non-traditional and emerging formats of cricket, such as 'Social Sixes' or 'Last Man Standing'? Yes or No? Please explain why.

5.4 Issue 4 - Prioritisation of investment

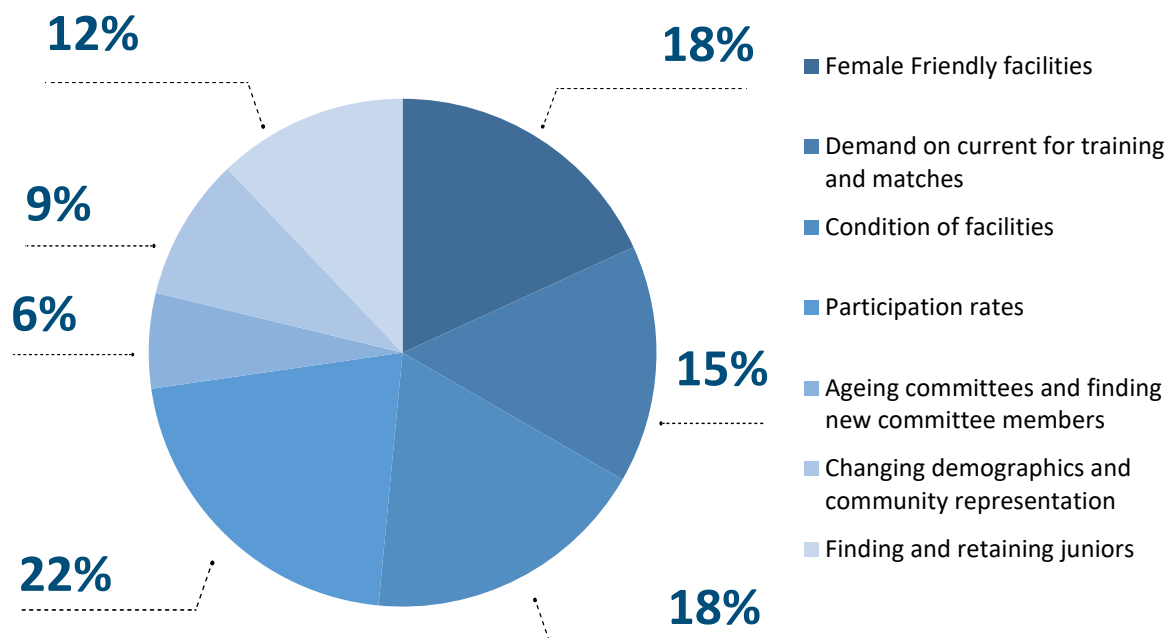
1. Should Council establish a clear set of funding criteria to facility improvements and principles for future investment into cricket facilities? If so, what do you think the top 3 principles should be?
2. With regard to investment into projects and/or initiatives that support the participation of cricket, where do you think Council should prioritise future investment into community cricket?

Please select:

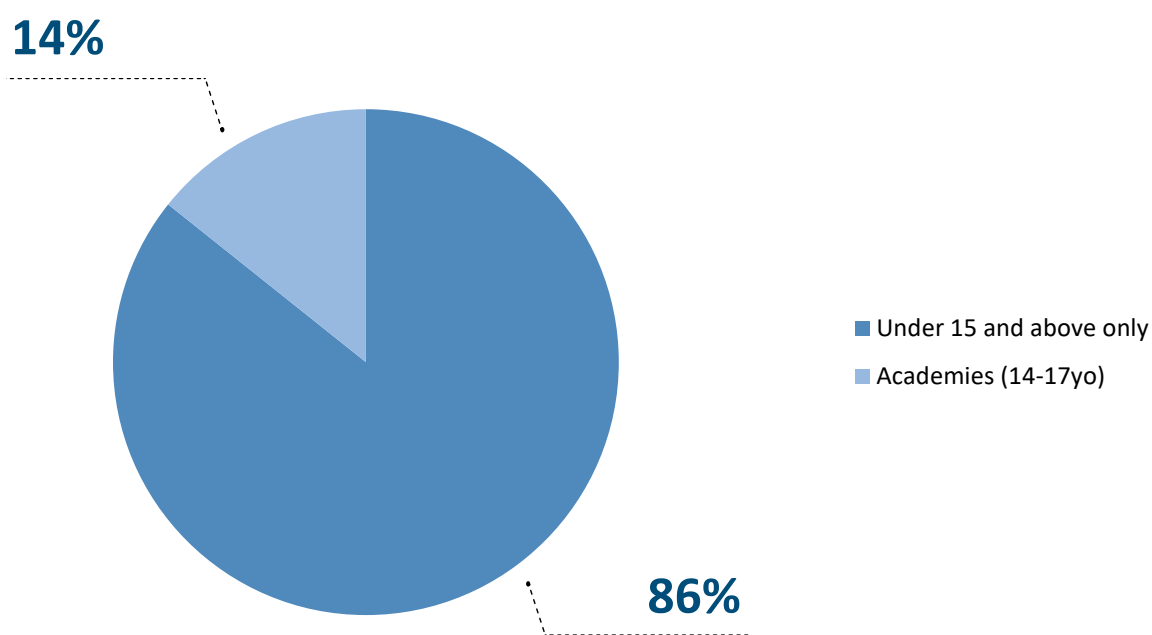
- Change rooms
 - Cricket nets
 - Centre wickets (turf and synthetic)
 - Cricket outfielders
 - Club development programs, such as volunteer mentoring, governance training or inclusivity training
 - Other (please specify)
3. Should Council prioritise investment into multi-use synthetic training facilities that more people can use and have a broader community benefit? Yes or No? Please explain why.

APPENDIX A – SUMMARY OF FORUM FINDINGS

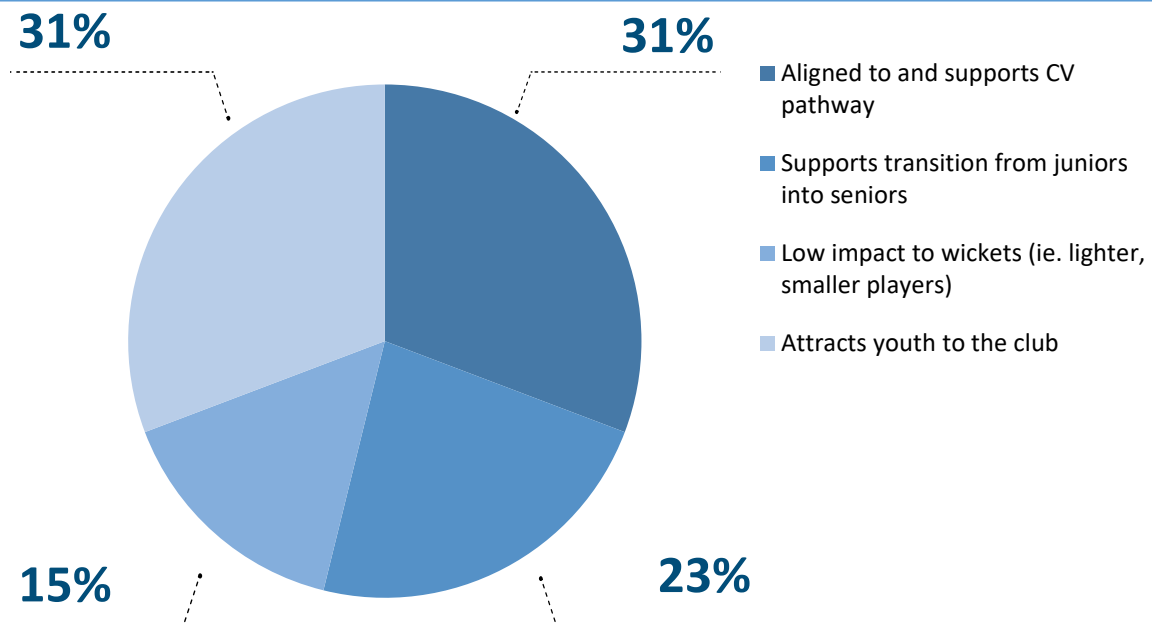
Forum Discussion Topic 1 – What are the most critical issues facing your cricket club?



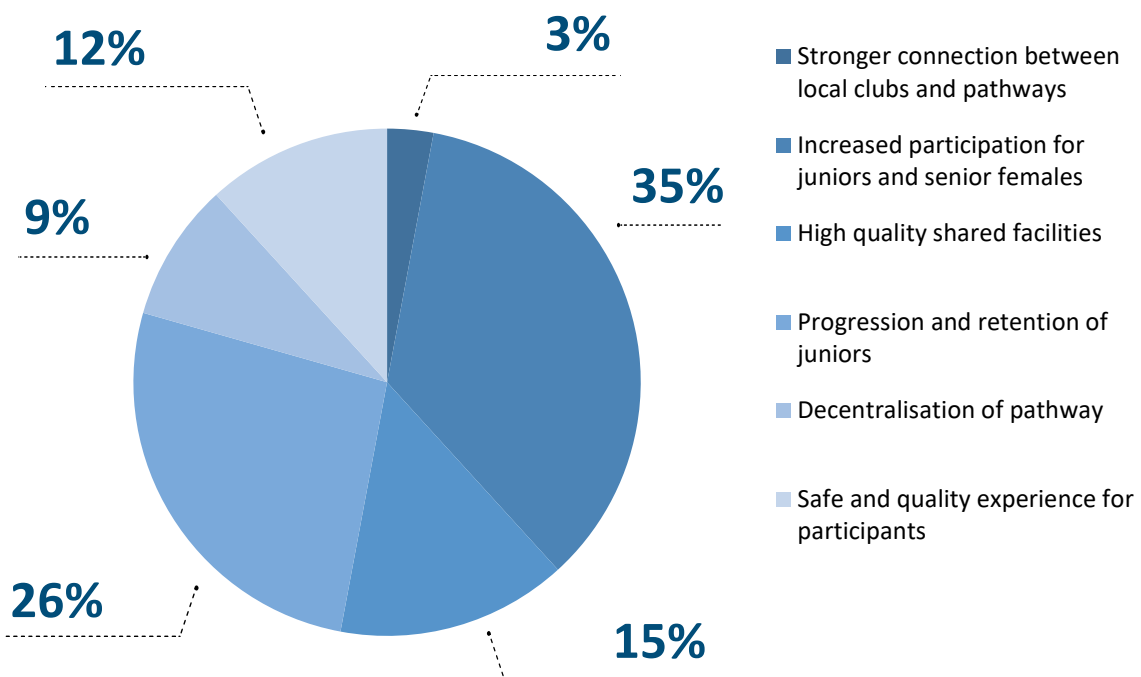
Forum Discussion Topic 2a – What age or standard of cricket should matches be accommodated on turf wickets?



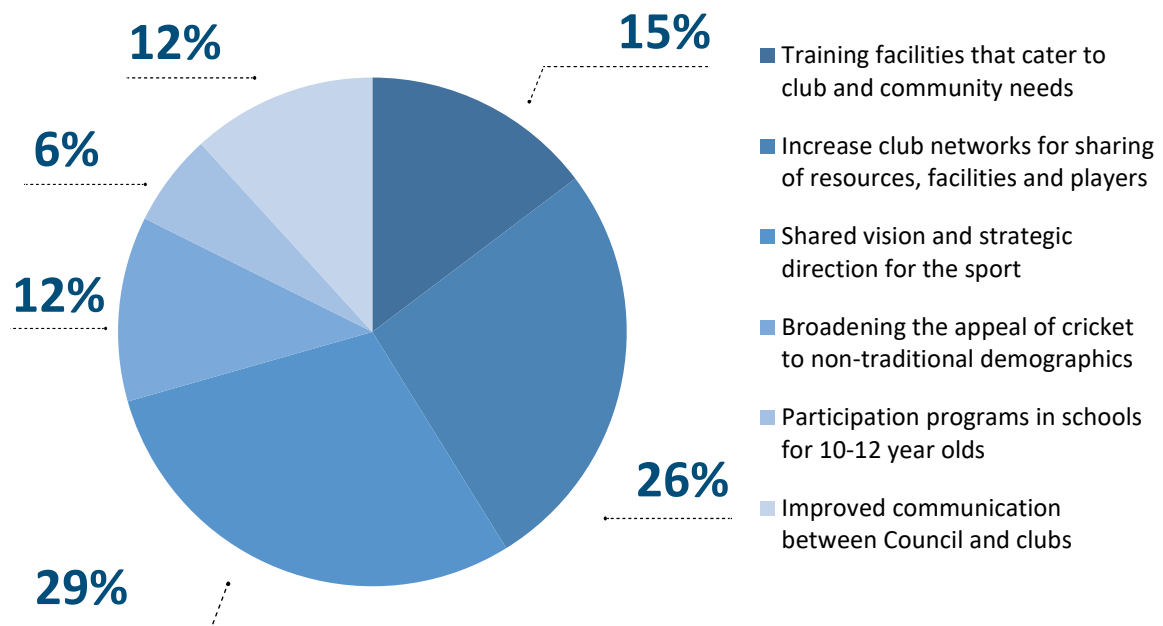
Forum Discussion Topic 2b – The benefits of juniors playing matches on turf, as nominated by clubs and Cricket Victoria



Forum Discussion Topic 3a – Ideally, what does the sport look like in 10 years?



Forum Discussion Topic 3b – What do you feel needs to happen in Monash to achieve this?



APPENDIX B – DISTRIBUTION OF CRICKET VENUES IN MONASH, 2021



HAVE YOUR SAY

We are keen to hear from you and receive your responses to questions that are listed in the discussion paper via the following link
www.monash.vic.gov.au/monash-cricket

All cricket clubs are encouraged to share this opportunity with their members. The views of all community members and stakeholders are also welcomed through this process.

Council is seeking feedback until
Wednesday 2 June.

MORE INFORMATION

Recreation Services

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